

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-10 (Canceled).

Claim 11 (New): A process of lyophilization for the preparation of a piroxicam: β -cyclodextrin inclusion compound in a 1:2.5 molar ratio comprising the steps of:

- a) dissolving piroxicam and β -cyclodextrin in the molar ratio of 1 to 2.5 and ammonium hydroxide in water brought to a temperature of at least 60 °C;
- b) bringing the hot solution to the temperature of -10 °C of complete freezing; and
- c) drying the frozen solution under vacuum.

wherein the temperature of -10 °C of complete freezing of the hot solution of step a) is achieved at a cooling rate equal to or higher than 1 °C/min.

Claim 12 (New): The process as claimed in claim 11, wherein the cooling rate is 1.5 °C/min.

Claim 13 (New): The process as claimed in claim 11 wherein the hot solution of step a) is poured on the temperature-controlled shelves of a freeze-dryer, and said shelves of said freeze-dryer are pre-cooled to a temperature of at least -30 °C in order to achieve a cooling rate equal to or higher than 1 °C/min.

Claim 14 (New): The process as claimed in claim 13, wherein the shelves of the freeze-dryer are pre-cooled to a temperature of at least -40 °C.

Claim 15 (New): The process as claimed in claim 11, which further comprises the step of lowering the temperature of the frozen solution of step b) to a temperature of at least -20 °C.

Claim 16 (New): The process as claimed in claim 15 wherein the temperature is lowered to between -30 and -40 °C.

Claim 17 (New): The process as claimed in claim 11, wherein the hot solution of step a) is poured in a dewar filled with liquid nitrogen.

Claim 18 (New): The process as claimed in claim 17 wherein the product obtained is in the form of solid granules.

Claim 19 (New): The process as claimed in claim 11, wherein the step c) of drying is carried out at a temperature of 50-60 °C.

Claim 20 (New): The process as claimed in claim 11 wherein the water in step a) is brought to a temperature of at least 70 °C.

Claim 21 (New): The process as claimed in claim 20 wherein the water is brought to a temperature comprised between 70 and 75 °C.

Claim 22 (New): The process as claimed in claim 11 wherein the ammonium hydroxide is used in a concentration of 28-30 % and in a 1:1 ratio (w/w) with respect to piroxicam.

Claim 23 (New): The process as claimed in claim 11 wherein the temperature of complete freezing of the hot solution is achieved in not more than 90 minutes.